

**HEAD START DISABILITIES SERVICES****NEWSLETTER**NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Quality Teaching and Learning

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## Read About It

**Improved Outcomes: Linking Research with Everyday Practice**

How do we know which teaching practices achieve good learning outcomes for children, from birth to five, who have (or are at risk for) developmental delays or disabilities? One resource practitioners and families can turn to is the [Division for Early Childhood \(DEC\) Recommended Practices](#) in Early Intervention/Early

Childhood Special Education. This document links research with children's home and classroom experiences by highlighting the practices that have shown better outcomes for children with disabilities and their families. The practices support young children's access and participation in inclusive settings and natural environments. Also, the document identifies key leadership responsibilities in implementing these practices.

In the [DEC Recommended Practices Glossary](#), you'll find easy-to-understand definitions to words such as "access," "consequences," "engagement," and "functional assessment." You'll also find citations for more information on each term.

## Take a Look

**Recognizing the First Signs of Autism**

The medical community, academic researchers, and autism advocacy groups all agree that early detection of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) is critical so that children can benefit from early intervention. Dr. Rebecca Landa of the Kennedy Krieger Institute developed an [early signs of autism video tutorial](#) that compares the behavior of 1-year-olds who show signs of ASD with those who do not. Watch for the subtle, yet significant, differences in the toddlers' early social development.

Are you interested in learning more about the early signs of ASD? The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) website offers a free four-module course called [Watch Me! Celebrating Milestones and Sharing Concerns](#). These trainings provide best practices for monitoring young children's development and talking about concerns with parents. Also, on the CDC website, [Developmental Milestones](#) for children aged 2 months to 5 years, in the section [Learn the Signs. Act Early](#).

## Try It Out!

Recently, we asked a group of disabilities coordinators about the top three ways they build positive relationships with local education agencies (LEAs). Here's a summary:

1. **Communicate.** Explore different communication approaches with your LEA partners. Make sure your LEA receives information about each child in a positive and timely way.

2. **Be flexible.** Not all education agencies are created equal! Some LEAs may require different approaches or communication tactics.
3. **Make it work!** Collaborate with teachers, service providers, and LEAs to provide the best individualized services you can for children on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

## Improve Your Practice

**Check out a 15-minute In-service Suite from the NCQTL**

### **Break it Down: Turning Goals into Everyday Teaching Opportunities**

How can teachers help children make steady progress? Often a child's learning objective or IEP goal is just too large to work on all at once. This in-service suite shows how to break a learning goal into smaller pieces to help a child achieve a series of successes. **Break it Down** includes a PowerPoint presentation, learning activities, and other supporting materials. The "Tips for Teachers" handout is especially helpful for those who work with children with diagnosed disabilities. It answers frequently asked questions about IEPs. This suite and all supporting materials are in the **National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL)** portal on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC).

## Families Too!



### **Introducing Me! A Bridge Between School and Home**

When a child with a disability transitions from Early Head Start to Head Start, or from Head Start to kindergarten, families want the new teacher to know about their child's strengths and challenges. The free, downloadable booklet, **Introducing Me!**, can help in this process. Families can use the resource to provide information about their child—aside from what is included in the IEP—in a fun and friendly way. Children can help answer questions like, "My favorite thing to celebrate is...", "When I feel frustrated, I might...", and "Things I like to do are...". The booklet can be given to the teacher on the first day of preschool or kindergarten. It's available in 18 languages including Arabic, Amharic, Chinese, Oromo, Somali, Tigrigna, and Vietnamese.

## Special Events

**Disabilities Dialogue** is a monthly webinar series for Head Start disabilities coordinators. Join NCQTL to learn from guest experts on topics that support your work in providing services to children with disabilities and their families. Visit the **Disabilities Dialogue** web platform to view past episodes.

The **Division for Early Childhood's 31<sup>st</sup> Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and their Families (DEC)** takes place in Atlanta, GA, Oct. 7–9.

## We Want to Hear from You!

The Head Start Disabilities Services Newsletter is produced monthly by NCQTL. Email [ncqtl@uw.edu](mailto:ncqtl@uw.edu) to submit questions or suggestions for future newsletter topics.

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